

MINUTES
OF AN
ASSOCIATION
OF
GENERAL BAPTISTS,

HELD AT

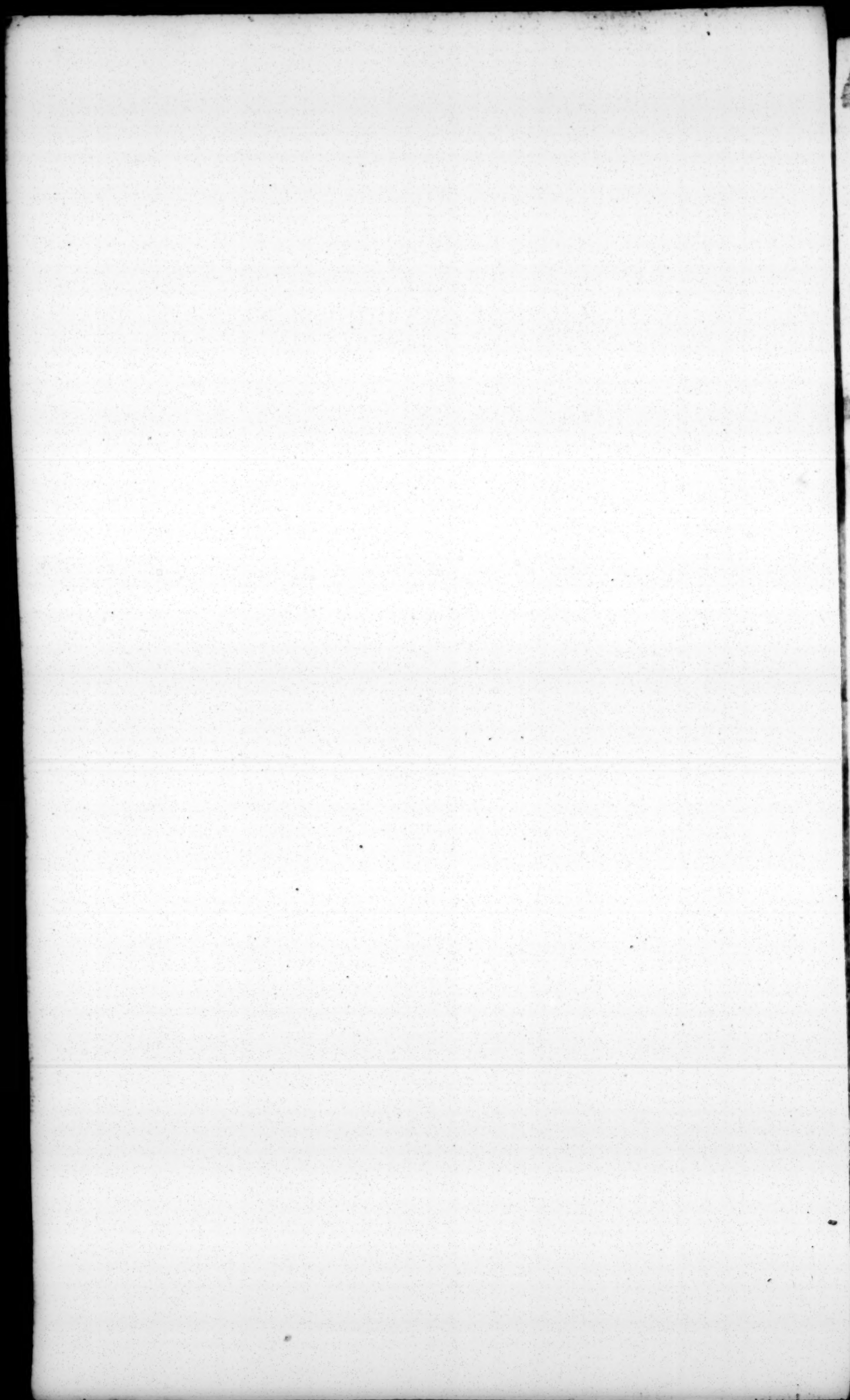
WISBEACH

CAMBRIDGESHIRE,

The 27th. and 28th. of April, 1791.

St. IVE'S.

PRINTED BY P. CROFT,



M I N U T E S
OF AN
A S S O C I A T I O N
OF
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The 27th. and 28th. of April, 1791.

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LIST of the CHURCHES.

	Number of Members.	Increase.		
		Baptised.	Removed.	Restored.
Ashford, Derbyshire, - - - -	21	1	—	—
Barton, Leicestershire, - - - -	180	9	3	1
Birmingham, - - - -	—	—	—	—
Boston, Lincolnshire, - - - -	180	1	3	—
Burnley, Lancashire, - - - -	31	—	—	1
Caldwell, Derbyshire, - - - -	42	—	—	—
Castle-Donington, Leicestershire, - -	110	5	5	3
Church-lane, Whitechapel, London,	232	14	10	—
Gamston and Retford, Nottinghamshire,	101	9	1	—
Gosberton, Lincolnshire, - - - -	22	2	2	—
Halifax, Yorkshire, - - - -	53	—	—	—
Hinkley, Leicestershire, - - - -	159	15	3	—
Ives, (St.) Huntingdonshire, - - - -	39	3	—	—
Ilkeston, Derbyshire, - - - -	110	5	1	—
Kegworth, Leicestershire, - - - -	124	10	—	—
Killingholn, Lincolnshire, - - - -	57	4	2	—
Kirkby-Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire,	41	3	—	—
Kirton, Lincolnshire, - - - -	—	—	—	—
Leak, Nottinghamshire, - - - -	155	5	1	1
Leicester, - - - -	117	11	1	1
Longford, Warwickshire, - - - -	123	—	—	—
Long-Sutton, Lincolnshire, - - - -	—	—	—	—
Longwood, Yorkshire, - - - -	10	—	—	2
Loughborough, Leicestershire, - - -	310	9	4	—
Maltby, Lincolnshire, - - - -	60	1	—	—
Melbourn, Derbyshire, - - - -	245	30	1	—
Nottingham, - - - -	152	2	4	—
Queenhead, Yorkshire, - - - -	44	2	—	1
Wadsworth, Yorkshire, - - - -	92	—	—	—
Wisbeach, Cambridgeshire, - - - -	38	2	—	3
Yarmouth, Norfolk, - - - -	—	—	—	—
Total Increase, 197, - - - -	2748	143	41	13
Total Decrease, 136, - - - -	—	—	—	—
Clear Increase, 61, - - - -	—	—	—	—

Decrease.				REPRESENTATIVES of the several Churches.	Pastors.	Unordained Ministers.
Removed.	Excluded.	Withdrawn	Dead.			
—	—	—	—	A Letter, ———	—	1
—	3	—	4	A Letter, ———	2	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	3
1	2	—	5	William Thompson, J. Bartol,	1	1
—	1	1	—	Edmund Whitaker, ———	—	2
3	—	—	1	A Letter, ———	1	—
—	2	—	3	A Letter, ———	—	1
—	3	2	7	Dan Taylor, ———	2	—
—	2	—	2	Jonathan Scott, ———	2	1
—	—	—	—	Joseph Binns, ———	—	2
2	1	—	1	William Burgefs, Jos. Hutchinson,	—	—
—	—	—	—	William Smith, ———	1	—
1	1	—	2	A Letter, ———	1	—
3	1	1	3	William Twells, ———	1	1
3	—	—	1	John Tarratt, ———	1	2
—	—	—	—	John Hannath, ———	1	1
—	—	—	—	George Hardstaff, ———	—	—
—	—	—	—	A Letter, ———	—	—
3	2	—	4	Richard Thorman, ———	1	—
—	5	—	2	John Deacon, ———	1	1
—	5	1	2	A Letter, ———	—	1
—	—	—	—	Henry Poole, ———	1	—
—	5	3	—	—	—	—
4	5	—	3	Benjamin Pollard, ———	1	2
2	—	1	—	Jeremiah Ingham, Wil. Atterby,	1	1
2	2	—	1	A Letter, ———	1	1
1	5	—	2	Robert Smith, ———	1	—
2	2	1	—	John Taylor, Joseph Ellis, ———	1	1
—	1	5	1	A Letter, ———	1	—
—	—	1	1	Joseph Freeston, G. Yorke, &c.	1	—
27	48	16	45		23	23

LIST of the CHURCHES.

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Boston, Lincolnshire, - - - -	180	1	3	—
Burnley, Lancashire, - - - -	31	—	—	1
Caldwell, Derbyshire, - - - -	42	—	—	—
Castle-Donington, Leicestershire, - -	110	5	5	3
Church-lane, Whitechapel, London,	232	14	10	—
Garnston and Retford, Nottinghamshire,	101	9	1	—
Gosberton, Lincolnshire, - - - -	22	2	2	—
Halifax, Yorkshire, - - - -	53	—	—	—
Hinkley, Leicestershire, - - - -	159	15	3	—
Iver, (St.) Huntingdonshire, - - - -	39	3	—	—
Ilkeston, Derbyshire, - - - -	110	5	1	—
Kegworth, Leicestershire, - - - -	124	10	—	—
Killingholn, Lincolnshire, - - - -	57	4	2	—
Kirkby-Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire,	41	3	—	—
Kirton, Lincolnshire, - - - -	—	—	—	—
Leak, Nottinghamshire, - - - -	155	5	1	1
Leicester, - - - -	117	11	1	1
Longford, Warwickshire, - - - -	123	—	—	—
Long-Sutton, Lincolnshire, - - - -	—	—	—	—
Longwood, Yorkshire, - - - -	10	—	—	2
Loughborough, Leicestershire, - - - -	310	9	4	—
Maltby, Lincolnshire, - - - -	60	1	—	—
Meibourn, Derbyshire, - - - -	245	30	1	—
Nottingham, - - - -	152	2	4	—
Queenhead, Yorkshire, - - - -	44	2	—	1
Wadsworth, Yorkshire, - - - -	92	—	—	—
Wisbeach, Cambridgeshire, - - - -	38	2	—	3
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—	—	—	—	A Letter, ———	—	1
—	—	—	4	A Letter, ———	2	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	3
1	2	—	5	William Thompson, J. Bartol,	1	—
—	1	1	—	Edmund Whitaker, ———	—	2
3	—	—	1	A Letter, ———	1	—
—	2	—	3	A Letter, ———	—	1
—	3	2	7	Dan Taylor, ———	2	—
—	2	—	2	Jonathan Scott, ———	2	1
—	—	—	—	Joseph Binns, ———	—	2
2	1	—	1	William Burgefs, Jos. Hutchinson,	—	—
—	—	—	—	William Smith, ———	1	—
1	1	—	2	A Letter, ———	1	—
3	1	1	3	William Twells, ———	1	1
3	—	—	1	John Tarratt, ———	1	2
—	—	—	—	John Hannath, ———	1	1
—	—	—	—	George Hardstaff, ———	—	—
—	—	—	—	A Letter, ———	—	—
3	2	—	4	Richard Thorman, ———	1	—
—	5	—	2	John Deacon, ———	1	1
—	5	1	2	A Letter, ———	—	1
—	—	—	—	Henry Poole, ———	1	—
—	5	3	—	—	—	—
4	5	—	3	Benjamin Pollard, ———	1	2
2	—	1	—	Jeremiah Ingham, Wil. Atterby,	1	1
2	2	—	1	A Letter, ———	1	1
1	5	—	2	Robert Smith, ———	1	—
2	2	1	—	John Taylor, Joseph Ellis, ———	1	1
—	1	5	1	A Letter, ———	1	—
—	—	1	1	Joseph Freeston, G. Yorke, &c.	1	—
27	18	16	45		23	23

MINUTES, &c.

WEDNESDAY Morning, Brother BENJAMIN POLLARD
preached from Col. i, 27, 28.—Brother DAN TAYLOR
in the Afternoon, from Acts xxvi, 18.

On THURSDAY Evening, Brother JOHN TAYLOR
preached from Job xvii, 9.

WEDNESDAY Evening began Business.

Chairman,----DAN TAYLOR.

Moderators, { JOHN TAYLOR,
 { JOHN DEACON.

Scribes, { THO. EWEN,
 { JOHN CLARE.

STATE

STATE of the CHURCHES.

ASHFORD. We have reason to complain of the want of the power of religion; however we hope we possess more of it than in time past. Preaching regularly at Ashford, Bradwell, and Wardlow: at the two former places well attended with hearers.

BARTON. We, as usual, have our difficulties, fears, and failings; yet, are united and happy among ourselves. A pleasing prospect surrounds us, our meeting-houses having never been better filled.

BOSTON. We bless the God of peace, that we are at peace among ourselves; but, we sincerely wish to see more life and love, more zeal and activity, among our members. We wish also to see the work of conversion go on, and many more added to us. The number of our hearers is, generally, considerable.

BURNLEY. We have two unordained Preachers, one of whom attends at Shore once a month. Some disorderly members have given us much trouble of late; and we have been exercised with various other difficulties, which have greatly perplexed our minds: yet, we hope religion is, in some respects, on the advance. Hearers have increased a little of late, and some have offered themselves to the church. We request the prayers of all the brethren.

CALDWELL. We are exercised with many trials. Brethren, pray for us.

CASTLE DONINGTON. This year, we have been exercised with very great troubles, which are not yet over: however, we are thankful, that amidst our trials the church in general is unanimous and peaceful. The work of conversion went on but slowly till the last two months; in which space, about 20 have professed to be converted.

CHURCH LANE, WHITE CHAPEL, LONDON. Our public worship is pretty well attended, though not so well as we wish. We trust the Lord is carrying on his work amongst us; yet, have reason to complain of too much lukewarmness

warmness prevailing. We are happy to observe, that we are unanimous, and amply fed with gospel truths.

GAMSTON and RETFORD. Ministers and meetings as last year. The church unanimous. Religion somewhat on the advance; but we meet with some persecution.

GOSBERTON. We have more hearers since Bro. Binns came amongst us; but still the state of religion is low. Preaching twice on the Lord's day at Gosberton, and once a fortnight at Swineshead Fen-Houses, where we have a considerable number of hearers, and some prospect of good being done.

HALIFAX. Our situation is very discouraging, being now without a Minister; but, are comfortably peaceful and harmonious among ourselves. We hope the Lord in his providence will again appear for us, and bless us with a Minister. Our views are directed to Bro. John Taylor, and we hope that the brethren will remember us in our mournful circumstances, and pray for us.

HINKLEY. We have three Meeting houses at which we regularly preach every Lord's day; also, at three other places in dwelling-houses. Pretty well attended with hearers, except at Hinkley, which we think is owing to the want of a suitable Minister for so large and populous a town. United and happy among ourselves.

IVES (Sr.) Officers and meetings as last year. The church is peaceful and united. Some are lively and active, but others appear to be wanting in love and zeal.

ILKESTON. Since we have had preaching in our Meeting-house at Smalley, the number of hearers has greatly increased; yet, the conversion of sinners seems to be at a stand. But, blessed be God, we have the happiness to be at peace among ourselves, and hope the God of peace and love will be with us. We return our sincere thanks to all the churches, who have generously assisted us in erecting the above mentioned Meeting-house; and humbly request others to open a door for us, as soon as convenient.

KEGWORTH. Ministers and officers as last year. The church peaceable. Well attended with hearers at all the places where we preach.

KILLINGHOLM. For the last part of the year, not so harmonious and happy as formerly, having had some unhappy differences about temporal property; but, are now settled we hope, upon a good foundation.

KIRKBY

KIRKBY-WOODHOUSE. We have preaching twice on the Lord's day, and a lecture on Wednesday Evenings. Well attended on Lord's day afternoons. We have had considerable difficulties and troubles, which, we fear, have done much injury to the cause of Christ. Pretty well united; some tolerably zealous, but others too much the reverse. Brethren pray for us.

KIRTON. We are sorry to say, that the cause of religion loses ground almost daily; especially since our Gamston friends have found it inconvenient for brother Scott to preach among us as usual. This, with some disagreeable circumstances which have lately happened among us, and too much want of unanimity among ourselves, render our state truly lamentable: yet, we trust, with the divine blessing on the assistance of an able Minister, our affairs would soon wear a more favourable aspect.

LEAK. Officers and meetings as last year. Pretty well attended with hearers. Unanimous among ourselves; and hope, that religion is on the advance.

LEICESTER. The public meetings in general have been kept up as usual, and are pretty well attended; but, we have too much reason to fear that in many, vital religion has considerably decayed: in others, we trust, it operates to the honour of our cause. On the whole, we wish to see more fervour, and a more steady attention to practical Godliness.

LONGFORD. We have had a great deal of trouble in the church for some time past, and likely to have more. Brethren pray for us.

LONGWOOD. We have had some trying circumstances this year; the immoral conduct of some who are excluded, has caused much grief, and done unspeakable mischief: we have had also various troubles of another kind; but God has delivered us, and we trust will deliver us.

LOUGHBOROUGH. Preaching regularly at the same six places as last year, but more frequently since bro. Truman settled among us. Well attended with hearers, especially at Quorndon; but, the work of conversion goes on rather slowly, and real religion much lower than we wish.

MALTBY. We lament the very low state of religion among us, and should be happy to see a revival, and conversion work going on. In other respects much the same as last year.

MELBOURN. Our meetings, in general, well attended. We have reason to lament, that so little progress, with several,

tal, is made in the divine life: yet, hope we have many who humbly walk with God, and rejoice in hope of his glory.

NOTTINGHAM. We wish to see more of the power of Godliness in general, and in some more of the form likewise: yet, we trust we have many who are alive to God, and who rejoice in the blood of the Lamb. In general, peaceable and united.

QUEENSHEAD. Our congregation is considerably large, and regular in attending; but there is apparently little good done. The work of conversion goes forward very slowly.

WADSWORTH. Since last year we have had many trials, our minister having been long afflicted, so that evening-preaching has been laid aside most of the winter. The congregation but small, especially on Lord's day mornings; but seems now on the increase. We are sorry to say that the state of religion is but low. Brethren pray for us.

WISBEACH. Officers, meetings, and hearers, much the same as last year, except prayer-meetings, which are thinly attended. Tolerably united, but wish to see a more affectionate concern for the interests of religion, and a more animated zeal in promoting them.

C A S E S.

CASE I. The churches at Ashford, Loughborough, and Nottingham, intending to erect a meeting-house at each place, request to know, whether there be a probability of receiving speedy assistance from their sister churches.

None of us see any probability of encouraging either of them to expect to collect among us this year; but, we think it may be advisable for them to write to the several churches in connection, that they may receive such encouragement as their circumstances may direct.

CASE II. Halifax Case. The removal of brother J. Taylor to Halifax having been agitated between the two churches of Halifax and Queens-head; the former requests the advice of the association on this subject.

After much conversation upon the subject, and several enquiries were made; it was concluded in the following manner, viz. Against his removal eighteen, for it two, Neuters three.

There appears to us no plan so eligible, as, that the two churches unite under the pastoral care of brother John Taylor;
or,

or, make the best they can of the Ministers which they can obtain from Queenshead or elsewhere.

CASE III. Killingham Case. We wish to know when it will suit the several churches, for us to apply to them for their assistance in erecting a meeting-house?

We advise our Killingham brethren to write to our respective churches as soon as convenient; and hope that at least, several of them will be able to take up their case this year.

CASE IV. Longwood case. Having obtained liberty of the lord of the manor, and some freeholders (two only being against it) to build a meeting-house upon the waste; we request the advice of the association whether we can build with safety; and, if we can, as we are but few and poor, we desire the assistance of our Sister churches when they think it convenient.

We cannot encourage our Longwood friends to build on the waste: and, we think it would be imprudent for them to build at all for some time to come, as we see no probability of their making any collection among us for several years.

E X T R A C A S E S.

I. Will it be better to publish a *new* hymn-book?—If it be, should not one be published as soon as possible?

Upon this case the following propositions were agreed to.

(1) That Bro. Deacon be appointed to form a collection from different hymn-books.

(2) That brethren D. Taylor, W. Thompson, G. Birley, B. Pollard, J. Scott, J. Taylor, R. Smith, and any other Minister that chooseth to attend, be a committee to examine and decide upon the above collection.

(3) That this committee meet at Leicester on the first Tuesday in August.

(4) That the price of the hymn-book *bound*, shall not exceed 3s. 6d. and that the churches be desired to send to the above meeting, the number of copies they intend to take. Bro. J. Deacon requests any of the brethren to assist him with manuscript hymns and others.

II. A petition being presented to the association from Mr. Robinson of Copy in the parish of Whalley, Lancashire, (see the end of the minutes;) we advise them to print 500

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copies

copies of the petition, and have them circulated, as prudence may direct, among Dissenters in general.

III. As bro. J. Deacon has collected several materials, in order to publish a history of the General Baptists in Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Warwickshire; he is desired to publish the same as soon as convenient.

IV. By desire of Mr. Boyce, a proposal was made to this meeting, respecting the union of what are called the Leicestershire and Lincolnshire associations: to which it was recommended that bro. Thompson attend at Coningsby, for the purpose of receiving their proposals for bringing the union into effect.

V. As a History of Baptism has been published by the late Rev. Mr. Robinson of Cambridge; we take the liberty of recommending it to our friends as, on the whole, a valuable and interesting work. Also, it is intended to publish by subscription, in the course of the next summer, Historical Researches, containing,—A general view of the Roman Empire, and of Judea at the birth of Jesus the Christ—Cautions necessary to a reader of ecclesiastical history—A brief history of the Greek and Roman churches—An interesting account of christians in all ages, and in various countries; who, before the period of the reformation, asserted and acted upon the principles of Religious Liberty—A view of the state of baptism in different communities—A history of the Baptists of Poland, Transylvania, Bohemia, Moravia, &c.—and a list of subscribers. Price to subscribers one Guinea; half to be paid on subscribing, the other on the delivery of the book, which will take place in, or before the month of September, 1791.

Subscriptions may be sent to the Rev. Mr. D. Taylor, No. 35 Union Street, Bishops-gate Street, London; Rev. Mr. Thompson, Boston; Rev. Mr. Deacon, Leicester; or to any of the Gentlemen mentioned in the printed proposals.

The next Association to be held at *Halifax* in Yorkshire, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in May, 1792.

Persons who attend may be accommodated at the Talbot Inn.

The persons appointed to preach, are

R. SMITH,	} In case of failure,	{ J. FREESTON,	
D. TAYLOR,			W. THOMPSON
B. POLLARD.			T. PICKERING.

LETTER

LETTER to the CHURCHES.

THE Pastors, Ministers, and other Representatives; to those Churches on whose account we assemble, and for whose eternal welfare we labour and pray.

Dearly beloved Brethren,

WE are permitted in the course of divine providence, once more to meet together on your behalf; we, therefore, as another token of our regard for you, address you on the important concerns of that high and noble calling wherewith you are called of God.

From the regard we have for your welfare, we earnestly entreat, that at all times, and in every situation of life, you remember that you are set as lights in the world. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Should you enquire how this may be done; one rule which we venture to recommend is, *as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men.*

With the people of the world among whom you live. Let your meekness, prudence, justice and love, be such as may obtain and preserve in you that important character of *walking honourably toward them that are without*, that you may have a good conscience; so that, if some shall through ignorance or prejudice speak evil of you as evil doers, they may (when your uprightness is manifested) be ashamed, having falsely accused your good conversation in Christ. Let your love to your carnal neighbours be seen by a readiness to do them all the good in your power, but especially in those things which may have a tendency, directly or indirectly, to bring their souls to God through Christ: but, do not, on any account whatever, carry your love so far as to sin against God to please them; this can never do any good to their souls. And, be upon your guard against every imprudent compliance with the conduct and conversation of the world; which, if it be not strictly sinful, yet, is dishonourable to the christian and may lead to sin and death in the end.

Labour to live peaceably with christians of other denominations. Shun that narrow, bigoted principle, which prevents some from either thinking, speaking, or hoping well
of

of those, who do not believe and practice, just according to their views of what is right and scriptural, in matters of religion. Dare we say that we are right in every thing? that we understand, and obey every Scripture, exactly according to the design of its divine Author? Such confidence would not become us. Shall we then presume to say, that professors of other denominations are right in nothing? God forbid. Let us rather exercise more of that charity which *hopeth all things, &c.*

Farther. Allowing that *we* are right, and *others* are wrong; consider whether the matter in which we differ be, what *scripture* has made, essential to salvation. And, while we wish you in love, *to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*; we beseech you to study to proportion your zeal, according to the importance of that for which you contend; as it has often been the case, that very hurtful disputes on religious subjects have been raised about matters of comparatively small moment.

Again. Admitting our christian neighbours to be in errors: are railing, bitterness, and evil speaking, adapted to convince and restore them? Certainly not. But, they are certainly adapted to hurt your own characters, your own souls, and the cause of your God. It is not to be expressed, or conceived, what mischief has been done to religion, by that railing and bitterness which have been manifested towards one another; and, sometimes, only through a difference of judgment about a mere sentiment or opinion. But love, candour, and kindness, can do no harm. These are good in themselves; every one must commend them. With this spirit, you may converse with those who differ from you in judgment. This spirit can hardly fail to be useful: and, efforts made under the influence of such a frame of mind (if they do not alter the judgment,) will be most likely to beget mutual love, which is a good evidence of genuine christianity. Here, brethren, your zeal, your knowledge, and your usefulness will appear; you and christians of other denominations will be advantaged; God and his cause will be honoured; and the enemy of souls disappointed. In a word, we beseech you to manifest by your behaviour, that you wish *grace and peace to all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*

If a want of love to christians of other denominations be wrong; if want of love to your carnal neighbours be wrong;
how

how bad it must be to be defective in love among yourselves! What! christians of the same church; go in and out together; meet at the table of the Lord; and, if it should ever be seen among yourselves; and especially, if it should be discovered by the world, that you do not love as brethren: how hurtful will this be! Oh brethren! Watch and pray against every thing that may have a tendency to cool your love towards one another.

Be careful not to do any thing that may have a tendency to hurt the mind of any other christian. Though it may be a thing indifferent to you, and what you have a right to do if you please; yet, if you know that this would hurt the mind of any of your brethren, it is not consistent with christian charity to persist in that indifferent thing, in such a case. On the other hand, take care, brethren, that you be not offended at every little thing that may not just suit your own inclinations. If the thing be sinful; treat it as such. If a thing of an indifferent nature; learn to be so indifferent about it as not to be offended with it: because, this would prove you more guilty than the person of whom you complain; and would give him more cause to be offended with you, than you had with him. And thus, by little things, little minds are greatly hurt, love is diminished, animosity enkindled, and contention takes place, which the sower of discord among brethren will endeavour to perpetuate; and, where it will end, and what the extent of its mischief may be, God only knows!

To conclude. We press it upon you to cultivate *fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and we pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In behalf of the Association,

B. POLLARD.

Mr.

Mr. ROBINSON's PETITION.

TO all true lovers of Religious Liberty, but more especially to that denomination of Protestant Dissenters commonly called GENERAL BAPTISTS; the humble petition of Benjamin Robinson of Copy, within Habergham-Eaves, in the parish of Whalley, and county of Lancaster,

S H E W E T H ;

THAT one Sarah Whittam, the daughter of a wealthy farmer, and considerable freeholder; and also a neighbour of your petitioner; being (as your petitioner believes) awakened to a sense of her lost estate and condition; was minded to attend public worship with the General Baptists at a Chapel at Burnley; to whom your petitioner stands related as a member: which being noticed to her father, who is of the established Church, and he not being willing to allow her that liberty; she at last formed a resolution to leave her father's house, which she did in December last, and took shelter under the roof of your petitioner; not being at all solicited thereto, either by your petitioner, or any of his family. This coming to the ears of her said father, he insisted on your petitioner's turning her away; or, otherwise, he would bring an action against him. Your petitioner believing that she was come under his roof for the sake of truth and a good conscience; could not in conscience put her away by force, as that, in his humble opinion, would be turning his back upon the truth, and declining the cross, for fear of suffering in his temporal property: and, as she would not leave his house without force; he therefore suffered her to remain in his family. Her father, in January last, brought his action, and your petitioner, for the reason above alledged, appeared to the writ. After some time, it was agreed to be referred: but, neither Arbitrators, nor Umpire, making any award; the bonds ran out, and the law proceedings were revived, and notice of a trial at the summer assizes at Lancaster, was given by the Plaintiff's Attorney. When the assizes came on, both parties went with their wit-

nesses to Lancaster; and the Plaintiff's Attorney not entering his cause so early as he might have done, and several causes of an extraordinary length coming on before; your Petitioner therefore, and six other persons, besides his Attorney; were obliged to attend at Lancaster for a whole week, besides the journey thither and back again. It was at last, however, settled by a rule of court, without a trial; the purport of which rule was. 1st. That the young woman should go home to her father, and become one of his family as before. 2nd. That she should have liberty to attend what public worship she pleased on a Sunday, and, if her father dare not trust her alone, he might send a person with her: but, if he did not send one, she might go by herself. This is the substance of the rule; and, it plainly appears, that the young woman's liberty is as effectually secured, as if a trial in form had taken place, and a verdict been given for your petitioner. But then, in the whole of the business, from the commencement of the suit, to the same being at issue; the costs of the Arbitrators and Umpire; the expences of attending so long at Lancaster; the Counsel's fees, the Attorney's wages for attending the assizes, and other accidental charges and expences; your Petitioner, has disbursed nearly the sum of 80l. A sum which (considering his small property, and numerous family) he is not well able to bear. And, as he humbly conceives, that the cause he has been defending, is not his own private quarrel, but the cause of Religious Liberty in general; in which, he apprehends, all Dissenters of every denomination are concerned; he therefore hopes, that every true lover of liberty of conscience, and who is blessed in any considerable degree with the good things of this life, will contribute a mite towards his expences. And your Petitioner (as in duty bound) will ever pray, &c.

It may seem surprising to some, who are unacquainted with the rise and progress of this dispute; that your Petitioner should have occasion for so many witnesses. The reason is this: he was charged by the Plaintiff with enticing his daughter (whom in his declaration he styled his servant) away from her father's house. Also, with designedly detaining and keeping her from returning back. And her father, and one of her brothers coming one day to your Petitioner's house, with intent to take her by force, and some acts of violence being used by the father; and also some misrepresentations taking place afterwards

Mr. ROBINSON's PETITION.

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afterwards on that head; it became necessary therefore, for your Petitioner to subpoena those who were present, in order to set the matter in a true and proper light.

BEN. ROBINSON.

October 7th. 1790.

SIGNED by the above named
Benjamin Robinson in the
presence of

JOHN HOLT.

We, the Ministers, &c. of the General Baptist Association, believe the above to be a true statement; and we desire those who are willing to contribute towards the reimbursement of Mr. Robinson, to send it to the hands of Rev. Mr. Dan Taylor, Union-Street, Bishops-gate Street, London; Rev. Mr. Thompson of Boston, Lincolnshire; Rev. Mr. Deacon of Leicester; or any other General Baptist Minister.

F I N I S.